

WHAT IS CLAIMED:

1. A method for managing access to a service comprising the steps of:

(A) delegating, to a delegatee by a delegator, over at least one ad hoc network in a personal area network, one or more permissions, wherein the one or more permissions comprise authority to access the service and to delegate one or more further permissions to one or more subsequent delegates and wherein the one or more permissions are represented using a digital signature;

(B) receiving from at least one of said permitted delegates data representing credential information relating to said one or more permissions via a credential transmission mechanism over a second computer network that is different from the at least one personal area network; and

(C) providing access to the service to at least one of said permitted delegates over said second computer network.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein said credential transmission mechanism comprises including said data in a header of an http request for a web page.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein said credential transmission mechanism comprises including said data in a URL.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein said credential transmission mechanism comprises including said data in a cookie within an http request.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein said personal area network comprises two or more devices that transmit data by infrared light waves.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein said personal area network comprises two or more devices that transmit data by digital short-range radio waves.

7. A system for managing access to a service comprising:

a delegation device that delegates to a delegatee from a delegator, over at least one ad hoc network in a personal area network, one or more permissions, wherein the one or more permissions comprise authority to delegate one or more further permissions to one or more subsequent delegates and wherein the one or more permissions are represented using a digital signature;

one or more first servers that receive from at least one of said permitted delegates data representing credential information relating to said one or more permissions via a credential transmission mechanism over a second computer network that is different from the personal area network; and that provide access to the service to at least one of said permitted delegates over said second computer network.

8. The system of claim 7 wherein said credential transmission mechanism comprises including said data in a header of an http request for a web page.

9. The system of claim 7 wherein said credential transmission mechanism comprises including said data in a URL.

10. The system of claim 7 wherein said credential transmission mechanism comprises including said data in a cookie within an http request.

11. The system of claim 7 wherein said personal area network comprises two or more devices that transmit data by infrared light waves.

12. The system of claim 7 wherein said personal area network comprises two or more devices that transmit data by digital short-range radio waves.

13. A method for managing access to a service comprising the steps of:

(A) delegating, to a delegatee by a delegator, one or more permissions, wherein the one or more permissions comprise authority to access the service and to delegate one or more further permissions to one or more subsequent delegates and wherein the one or more permissions are represented using a digital signature;

(B) receiving from at least one of said permitted delegates data representing credential information relating to said one or more permissions, wherein said data is included in a header of an http request for a web page, over a second computer network that is different from the at least one personal area network; and

(C) providing access to the service to at least one of said permitted delegates over said second computer network.

14. A method for managing access to a service comprising the steps of:

(A) delegating, to a delegatee by a delegator, one or more permissions, wherein the one or more permissions comprise authority to access the service and to delegate one or more further permissions to one or more subsequent delegates and wherein the one or more permissions are represented using a digital signature;

(B) receiving from at least one of said permitted delegates data representing credential information relating to said one or more permissions, wherein said data is included in a URL, over a second computer network that is different from the at least one personal area network; and

(C) providing access to the service to at least one of said permitted delegates over said second computer network.

15. A method for managing access to a service comprising the steps of:

(A) delegating, to a delegatee by a delegator, one or more permissions, wherein the one or more permissions comprise authority to access the service and to delegate one or more further permissions to one or more subsequent delegatees and wherein the one or more permissions are represented using a digital signature;

(B) receiving from at least one of said permitted delegatees data representing credential information relating to said one or more permissions, wherein said data is included in a cookie within an http request, over a second computer network that is different from the at least one personal area network; and

(C) providing access to the service to at least one of said permitted delegatees over said second computer network.

16. A system for managing access to a service comprising:

a delegation device that delegates to a delegatee from a delegator one or more permissions, wherein the one or more permissions comprise authority to delegate one or more further permissions to one or more subsequent delegatees and wherein the one or more permissions are represented using a digital signature;

one or more first servers that receive from at least one of said permitted delegatees data representing credential information relating to said one or more permissions in a header of an http request for a web page over a second computer network that is different from the personal area network; and that provide access to the service to at least one of said permitted delegatees over said second computer network.

17. A system for managing access to a service comprising:

a delegation device that delegates to a delegatee from a delegator one or more permissions, wherein the one or more permissions comprise authority to delegate one or more

further permissions to one or more subsequent delegates and wherein the one or more permissions are represented using a digital signature;

one or more first servers that receive from at least one of said permitted delegates data representing credential information relating to said one or more permissions in a URL over a second computer network that is different from the personal area network; and that provide access to the service to at least one of said permitted delegates over said second computer network.

18. A system for managing access to a service comprising:

a delegation device that delegates to a delegatee from a delegator one or more permissions, wherein the one or more permissions comprise authority to delegate one or more further permissions to one or more subsequent delegates and wherein the one or more permissions are represented using a digital signature;

one or more first servers that receive from at least one of said permitted delegates data representing credential information relating to said one or more permissions in a cookie within an http request over a second computer network that is different from the personal area network; and that provide access to the service to at least one of said permitted delegates over said second computer network.